



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

WEST BANK/GAZA

FACT SHEET

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE OFFICE

PROJECT PROFILE

Rule of Law, Justice and Enforcement *Netham*

JUNE 2010



Newly renovated and upgraded Public Services Offices at the Ministry of Justice

CHALLENGES

- A public disillusioned with the government's ability to provide justice and the rule of law.
- Weakened justice sector bodies and unclear institutional roles and responsibilities.
- Overwhelming case backlogs and lack of enforcement mechanisms.
- Difficulty of judges, lawyers, and witnesses to appear in court due to movement and access restrictions.
- A non-functioning Palestinian Legislative Council prevents new laws from being promulgated, except by Presidential Decree.

Project Overview

Netham promotes the rule of law in the West Bank and Gaza by providing technical and advisory support to the High Judicial Council, the Ministry of Justice, and related justice sector institutions. By bolstering the justice system and encouraging judicial independence, the Rule of Law Program reduces opportunities for corruption and provides Palestinians with a transparent system for settling disputes.

Goals

- Strengthen the ability of the PA to promote and provide the rule of law.
- Increase public confidence in the justice sector.
- Improve enforcement of laws and court orders to serve the public.

Activities

Netham strengthens the capacity of the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the High Judicial Council (HJC), the courts and other justice bodies. It also trains judges and other justice-sector personnel on conducting financial controls, inspection and oversight and forming policy departments and strategic planning units.

In addition, *Netham* develops and supports the Court Administration Department in courts throughout the West Bank. It has also established and supported the Palestinian Judicial Institute as well as renovated courthouses.

To increase public confidence in the judiciary, *Netham* conducts outreach and citizen engagement activities, including small grants to civil society organizations that help raise citizens' awareness of the rule of law, supporting television, newspaper, and radio spots to disseminate information on the judiciary. *Netham* also enhances legal education at Al Quds University Law School, working with the Ministry of Education to review and improve mandatory civic education programs in grades 1-9.

While USAID's project concentrates on providing assistance to the MOJ and the HJC in the civil justice sector, other donors such as the U.S. State Department, U.S. Treasury, U.S. Military, Canada, the Netherlands, Italy, the EU, and the UN support, in a parallel and mutually reinforcing way, improvement in the criminal justice sector as well as the security sector. A Justice Sector Working Group and a Security Sector Working Group including all involved donors meets quarterly. The U.S. assistance is coordinated through the President's Special Envoy for Middle East Peace, Senator Mitchell and his team.



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Inaugurating the new National Justice Record Office in Ramallah – improving citizens' services

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Successes

- Supported development of the first and second Palestinian Authority National Justice Sector Strategies (2008-2010 and 2011-2013).
- Renovated the Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, Bethlehem and Qalqilia Notary Public and Civil Judgment Departments, including a systems upgrades for queuing, archiving and case filing.
- Helped develop the first national Court Administration Department providing services to all the courts in the West Bank and holding the first annual Court Administration conference for all court administrators in the West Bank.
- Connected the 23 court sites across the West Bank to the High Judicial Council through a Wide Area Network (WAN), vastly improving information sharing among the courts.
- Working with USAID's youth empowerment program, provided an opportunity for recent college graduates to serve as judicial interns who succeeded in automating and archiving over 350,000 court files and cases in the Civil Judgment and Notary Public departments, as well as the First Instance and Conciliation Courts in Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron, Jenin, and Bethlehem. Many interns later found permanent jobs with the PA and justice sector.
- With the Ministry of Justice, introduced a new and improved National Justice Record, responsible for the public service of issuing non-conviction certificates, including renovating waiting rooms at the MOJ, introducing automated waiting systems and developing automated archival and retrieval systems. Opened satellite centers in Hebron and Nablus, providing vastly improved services to citizens.
- Awarded 14 grants to civil society organizations that are contributing to promoting better public understanding of and respect for the rule of law.
- Developed four courses at Al Quds University Law School including Legal Ethics, Legal Technology, Legal Writing and a Moot Court course. Provision of a computer lab and renovation of the law library, moot courtroom and four classrooms.
- With the Ministry of Education, completed a civic education review and evaluation for grades 1-9 as well as a teacher's reference manual for civic education to enhance curriculum and teaching methodologies.

Project Detail

Implementing Partner: DPK Consulting, a division of ARD. Life of Project: 09/30/2005-09/26/2010, Total estimated cost: \$14 million.